

RED SEAL RECORD



"HIS MASTER'S VOICE"

RCA VICTOR

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF. MARCAS REGISTRADAS

SIDE 1
MO 1329

12-1014-A
In Italian

Verdi

Aida: Act I

CELESTE AIDA
(Heavenly Aida)

Enrico Caruso, Tenor
with Orchestra

RCA VICTOR DIVISION OF RADIO CORPORATION

OF AMERICA, CAMDEN, N. J. MADE IN U. S. A.



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SIDE 2
MO 1329

12-1014-B
In Italian

Donizetti
L'Elisir d'Amore: Act II

UNA FURTIVA LAGRIMA
(A Furtive Tear)

Enrico Caruso, *Tenor*
with Orchestra

RCA VICTOR DIVISION OF RADIO CORPORATION

CAMDEN, N. J. MADE IN U. S. A.



OF AMERICA

RED SEAL RECORD



"HIS MASTER'S VOICE"

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12-1015-A
SIDE 3
MO 1329

12-1015-A
In Italian

Leoncavallo
Pagliacci: Act I

VESTI LA GIUBBA

(On with the Play)

Enrico Caruso, *Tenor*
with Orchestra

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SIDE 4
MO 1329

12-1015-B
In Italian

Flotow

Martha: Act III

M'APPARI
(Like a Dream)

Enrico Caruso, *Tenor*

RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra

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154
SIDE 5
MO 1329

12-1016-A
In Italian

Bizet

Carmen: Act II

IL FIOR CHE AVEVI A ME TU DATO
(Flower Song)

Enrico Caruso, *Tenor*

RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra

RCA VICTOR DIVISION OF RADIO CORPORATION

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OF AMERICA, CAMDEN, N. J.

12-1016-A

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"HIS MASTER'S VOICE"

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SIDE 6
MO 1329

12-1016-B

In Italian

Mascagni
Cavalleria Rusticana

ADDIO ALLA MADRE

(Farewell, Dear Mother)

Enrico Caruso, *Tenor*

with Orchestra

RCA VICTOR DIVISION OF RADIO CORPORATION



OF AMERICA, CAMDEN, N. J. MADE IN U. S. A.

4.97

RCA VICTOR
Red Seal Records



Memories
of

CARUSO

- VERDI AIDA CELESTE AIDA
- LEONCAVALLO PAGLIACCI VESTI LA GIUBBA
- FLOTOW MARTHA M'APPARI
- MASCAGNI CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA ADDIO ALLA MADRE
- BIZET CARMEN FLOWER SONG
- DONIZETTI L'ELISIR D'AMORE UNA FURTIVA LAGRIMA

Photo—Bettmann Archive

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MEMORIES OF CARUSO

Enrico Caruso Tenor with Orchestra

On November 11, 1903, Enrico Caruso, then in his thirtieth year, set foot on United States soil for the first time. Heinrich Conried had recently been appointed to the management of the Metropolitan Opera Company; Caruso had signed his first Metropolitan Opera contract. Italy, Egypt, Russia, France, Portugal and South America had been the proving ground for a figure destined to reign as king in the musical melting pot that was New York.

The doors of the Metropolitan spelled a tremendous welcome to this newcomer, loudly heralded by the press as the singer who would follow in the footsteps of the beloved Jean de Reszke. Each succeeding year, until the fateful 1920, he was welcomed—not in the mantle of another, however—but as Enrico Caruso, for whom one paid fabulous prices to stand and hear, for whom audiences shouted themselves hoarse, and at whose untimely death an entire world mourned.

Caruso's Metropolitan debut, which took place on the night of November 23, 1903, was unglamorous enough. As a rather stocky Duke in a performance of Verdi's *Rigoletto*, the tenor caused no particular furor, although newspaper reports were rather favorable. Subsequent performances of *Aida* and *Tosca* still aroused none of the critical enthusiasm that was soon to reach the bursting point. With his introductory appearance as Rudolfo in *La Bohème*, however, the singer had obviously begun to take his audiences by storm. Between the night of his debut and the end of the first season on February 10, 1904, Caruso had sung twenty-nine performances, including four in Philadelphia. The farewell production, in which he shared honors with Marcella Sembrich and the baritone, Giuseppe Campanari, was the opera, *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

The 1904-05 season, which opened with *Aida*, marked

the beginning of the riotous triumphs in America that one soon came to expect whenever Caruso was involved. A transcontinental tour with the Metropolitan further established him across the nation as the tenor of the century. From then on, between seasons with the Metropolitan, he appeared in Europe, conquering all who heard him and causing one writer to comment, after a London performance of *Madame Butterfly*, "What is he? He is not a singer. He is not a voice. He is a miracle."

In 1908, Heinrich Conried was succeeded by Giulio Gatti-Casazza as general manager of the Metropolitan and Andrea Dippel as administrative manager. Arturo Toscanini, who had often been associated with Caruso in the past, took up the baton as principal conductor (a post he maintained until 1915). The following year, Gatti-Casazza became sole manager. Those who recall this era usually do so at length, quoting a dazzling list of personalities that complemented the unbelievable Caruso singing—names like Destinn, Amato, Aida, DeLuca, Farrar, Scotti, Muzio, Hempel, Plançon, Galski, Matzenauer, the conductor Polacco and others. Those of us not so fortunate are content enough with recordings that have long been collectors' items.

To Caruso went many "first" honors. He was the first of the great Italian tenors to be featured on records, the phenomenal sale of which converted the recording of music into a tremendous industry. He was among

the first to be broadcast from the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House. On January 20, 1910, portions of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*, both starring Caruso, were sent through the air and picked up by fifty radio amateurs, a group of invited guests in a Times Square hotel and several ships in the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

The recordings included in this album represent a brief cross-section of Caruso's greatest successes and have been gathered from the tenor's long list of records now in the RCA Victor catalog. They recall performances whose ovations caused the walls of the Met to reverberate. When Caruso sobbed his *Vesti la giubba* from *Pagliacci* he was usually surrounded by a classic cast that included Scotti and Farrar. The recording we hear was made on March 17, 1907. In *Cavalleria Rusticana*, one of his earliest triumphs, he shared honors with Destinn and Amato. The recording of *Addio alla madre*, from the last scene, was made in 1916. The same principals will be remembered in productions of *Aida*, from which we include a 1911 recording of *Celeste Aida*. From *Carmen*, we hear the beloved *Flower Song*, sung in Italian, on a disc pressed November 7, 1909. The historic recording from *Martha M'appari*, dates back to November, 1917, while *Una Jurtiva lagrima*, from Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'amore*, was pressed in 1911.

It was while singing this role at a 1920 performance that the tenor became ill enough to allow the curtain to be rung down before the opera was well under way. Little did his devoted public realize that a few days later, on December 24, 1920, as Eleazar in *La Juive*, Caruso would sing to them for the last time.

"He was a unique artist," said Gatti-Casazza, "with whom none other compared. I do not see how we can ever have such another."